

L'Ecole

Nº 41

2018 Merlot Estate Walla Walla Valley

WINEMAKER COMMENT

L'Ecole Nº 41 is recognized as one of Washington State's top producers of premium Merlot and this estate vineyard blend represents our highest expression of this noble varietal. The elegance and old-world structure of Seven Hills Vineyard adds complexity to the power and minerality of Ferguson.

ESTATE VINEYARD

Ferguson Vineyard 50% - Fractured basalt

Seven Hills Vineyard 50% - Wind-blown loess

These prestigious vineyards are Certified Sustainable and Certified Salmon Safe.

VINTAGE

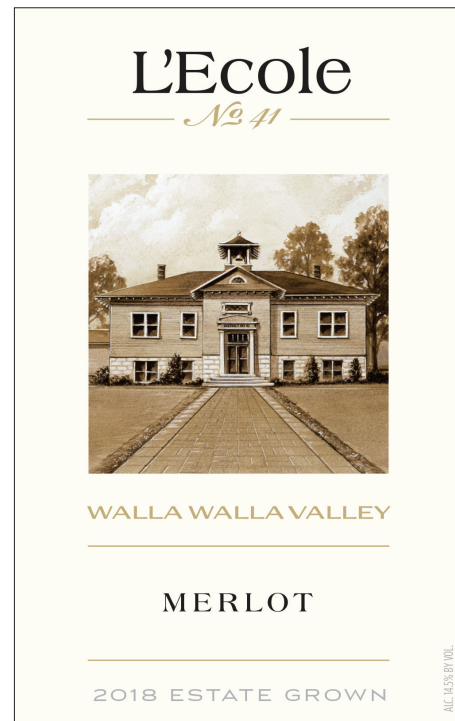
- Perfectly dry harvest weather extended hang-time resulting in rich color and vibrant fruit flavors, another great vintage for Washington State.
- A late bud-break in mid-April was followed by a warm May with rapid canopy growth. A quick, even bloom set a uniform crop. A cool June contributed to healthy berry growth.
- July and early August were warm, with occasional heat spikes. Canopies were managed to avoid sunburn and irrigation was micromanaged. Intense cluster thinning was required to control yields.
- Veraison tracked 2017 in Walla Walla and was slightly ahead in other regions of the state. A brief rainfall shifted early September into cooler weather leading to two months of near-perfect weather conditions for final fruit maturity.
- Higher sugars were balanced against higher acid levels and wonderfully intense color and tannin extraction, big fruit flavors, and overall balanced structure. Another strong Washington vintage.

WINEMAKING

- Over 35 years of meticulous vineyard management and winemaking experience are fundamental to the quality of our wines and reputation for excellence. We are engaged in growing and making 100% of our wines.
- Each lot was hand-harvested ripe and gently crushed into 1.5 ton stainless steel fermenters.
- Gentle handling of the fruit through hand punch downs and gravity assisted movements were utilized throughout the entire winemaking process.
- The wine was cleanly racked to small French oak barrels, 35% new, with four rackings over 18 months.

TASTING NOTES

This expressive, well-structured Merlot reveals opulent aromatics of dark cherry and blackberry, pipe tobacco, savory cedar, and roasted figs, completed with a touch of sage. Its ripe rich texture is laced with delicate graphite notes, along with bitter chocolate and plum, grounded with ample polished tannins.



HARVEST DATA

Harvest Dates	SEPTEMBER 12 - OCTOBER 5, 2018
Average tons/acre	3.8
Average Brix	25.4°
Average pH	3.33
Average Acidity	5.9 g/L

WINE DATA

Composition	84% MERLOT, 12% CABERNET FRANC, 4% CABERNET SAUVIGNON
pH	3.67
Total Acidity	6.2 g/L
Alcohol	14.5%
Bottling Date	FEBRUARY 21, 2020
Release Date	APRIL 2021
Case Production	1,070